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'ARAFAT CHAIRS FATAH COMMITTEE MEETING IN KUWAIT

LD052254 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 2230 GMT 5 Apr 83

[Text] A meeting of the Central Committee of the Palestine liberation movement Fatah began in Kuwait tonight under the chairmanship of Yasir 'Arafat.

It was learned from committee sources that the committee will be discussing at this meeting -- which is the second to be held in Kuwait within the last 4 months -- the results of 'Arafat's talks with the king of Jordan, current developments in the Palestinian issue, and the statement of the Executive Committee which was issued in Amman the day before yesterday, which stated the committee's rejection of U.S. President Reagan's plan for the settlement of the Middle East crisis.

AFP: Amman Talks Reviewed

NC060957 Paris AFP in English 0848 GMT 6 Apr 83

[Text] Kuwait, April 6 (AFP) -- The Central Committee of Fatah, the predominant group within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), ended a meeting here early today under the chairmanship of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat that focused on recent Jordanian-Palestinian talks in Amman. The session came during a 48-hour pause in the talks that was announced in [words indistinct] to allow time formulate a joint communique. The statement, according to senior PLO officials, could be issued when Mr 'Arafat returns to the Jordanian capital.

Mr 'Arafat and King Husayn conferred four times in Amman in an effort to reach an accord that would allow Jordan to participate in Middle East peace negotiations. But the delay in issuing the communique and ambiguous remarks by PLO leaders suggested that certain hard-line members within the organization's Executive Committee objected to the terms in the proposed statement.

PLO sources said the hardliners wanted Jordan and the PLO to condemn U.S. President Ronald Reagan's Middle East peace plan, but that Amman refused, arguing that the ideas constituted a step forward.

No details were available of the Central Committee session here, although the situation in the Israeli-occupied territories and the possibility of an Arab summit later this month were also said to have been discussed.

Mr 'Arafat was expected later today to brief the amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad as-Sabah, and Ahmed Ben Saouda, a delegate of King Hassan II of Morocco, on the Jordanian-Palestinian dialogue.

According to unconfirmed reports, the PLO chief was also expected to travel to Saudi Arabia before returning to Amman.

KUNA: PLO Denies Dispute

LD052105 Kuwait KUNA in English 1813 GMT 5 Apr 83

[Text] Kuwait, April 5 (KUNA) -- Palestine Liberation Organization Tuesday denied reports that a dispute among members of PLO Executive Committee had erupted and consequently led to an absence of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian joint communique following talks between Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and King Husayn of Jordan.

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'ARAFAT: NO ONE CAN SPEAK ON BEHALF OF PLO

GF100948 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 9 Apr 83 pp 1, 13

[Excerpt] After 4 days of meetings in Kuwait, Palestinian leaders have turned their backs on the possibility of Jordan's joining the peace talks which U.S. President Reagan September 1982, which ignores the PLO and disregards the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat has left Kuwait for Aden. He is apparently waiting for Jordan's response to the Palestinian reply rejecting the proposal that Jordan join the talks with a Jordanian delegation that includes Palestinians who are not PLO members -- a reply that was carried by his political adviser, Hani al-Hasan, to Amman on 8 April. Hani al-Hasan described his mission as the most difficult in his life.

In an exclusive statement to AL-WATAN prior to his departure from Kuwait, 'Arafat catagorically rejected delegating any quarter other than the PLO, their legitimate representative, to speak on behalf of the Palestinian people.

'Arafat added: "We have waged a bitter struggle and our martyrs have sacrificed their lives to realize the gains achieved by the PLO throughout the past years. How can we today let someone else speak on our behalf?" 'Arafat added that the resolutions of the PNC are very clear on this matter.

'Arafat said that the meeting of the past 4 days were very important for drawing up views on the next stage. He said: The democratic spirit of our revolution was clear in the discussions that took place. 'Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] asserted: The Palestinian revolution is strong and will continue its march until our goals are achieved and our state is established on our Palestinian land.

Abu 'Ammar paid tribute to the unity of ranks among the Palestinian factions, unity that has withstood repeated attempts to undermine it. He declared: The 4-day discussions dealt, of course, with my talks with King Husayn in Jordan and the talks of the Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Committee and assessed the political and military situation of the Palestinian revolution at the present and the future stages. The discussions also referred to the neo-Nazi crimes that are being committed against our people in the occupied territories, the latest of which was Israel's attempt to exterminate our people by the use of poison gas. The discussions also dealt with the PLO's plans for action, particularly our call for an Arab summit conference.

Abu 'Ammar stressed the need for a Jordanian-Palestinian relationship and emphasized the distinctive charcter of such a relationship as defined by the PNC. He added: "The primary objective of this relationship is to serve the interests of our Jordanian and Palestinian people."

Abu 'Ammar stressed the PLO's adherence to the resolutions of the Fes summit conference and particularly to the Arab plan. He said: This is the minimal solution that is acceptable to us. 'Arafat declared: At the same time we totally reject the Reagan plan, not for the sake of rejection, but because it does not fulfill our rights and ignores our people's right to self-determination.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

On 13 April 1983 FBIS will start the automated production of the Middle East & Africa and the South Asia DAILY REPORTS. The books will be printed in double-column format employing modern typographical features which permit increased wordage per page and flexibility in presentation. The automated production of the remaining six DAILY REPORTS will follow in 1984.

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Palestinian Forces in Lebanon on 'Maximum Alert'

JN161801 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1717 GMT 16 Apr 83

[Text] Brother Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces, has announced that the Palestinian forces in Lebanon have been placed in a maximum state of alert and mobilization to face any possible Israeli aggression. Abu Jihad told journalists in Damascus that the Palestinian revolution forces expect an Israeli military operation. He said that, since leaving Beirut, the Palestinian forces have concentrated on quickly rebuilding their military strength and reorganizing, retraining, and reequipping themselves in central and northern Lebanon.

Israeli Attack Expected

LD161358 Kuwait KUNA in English 1227 GMT 16 Apr 83

[Text][Word indistinct], April 16 (KUNA)—A ranking Palestine Liberation Organization [words indistinct] has obtained "the green light" from the U.S. to launch an aggression against PLO forces in eastern [words indistinct] Lebanon.

The alarm was sounded by deputy commander of the PLO for[word indistinct] Khalil al-Wazir, better known by his codename of Abu Jihad. Al-Wazir made the announcement in a dialogue with reporters [word indistinct] one day after returning from the Jordanian capital of Amman where he participated in the funeral procession of slain Palestinian official Dr. 'Isam as-Sartawi who was assassinated last Sunday while representing the PLO at the Socialist International (SI) conference in Portugal.

Al-Wazir upon arriving here Friday evening, said PLO forces in central and northern Lebanon were placed in a state of "maximum alert" to confront any possible Israeli attack. Al-Wazir's remarks coincide with reports from Beirut of an escalation in the military situation along the 50-kilometer frontline across the central Lebanese Al-Biqa' Valley where the Israeli occupation forces are entrenched within meters from Syrian soldiers and PLO guerrillas. Al-Wazir said "we and our Syrian brethren expect an Israeli military operation aimed against our forces. That is why all precautionary measures were taken to defend the Palestinian revolution and the Arab territories both in Lebanon and Syria."

Forces of the Palestinian revolution, according to Al-Wazir, "believe that any aggression against any part of the Arab homeland is a direct attack against the revolution and cause." PLO forces, Al-Wazir noted, "have, since the evacuation from Beirut (late last August) concentrated efforts on the swift rebuilding of its military capabilities, training and armament in the Al-Biqa', northern Lebanon, Syria and throughout all other military bases." In an apparent comparison, Al-Wazir explained that PLO forces are "now much stronger than before the Israeli invasion of Lebanon," which started last June four. The "Palestinian Military Council" which is a joint military command responsible for fighters of the eight guerrilla groups making up the PLO, "is considering a series of measures to complete the unified formation of the revolution's forces."

The Damascus representative of the International Red Cross Community (IRCC) was informed Friday that his organization "should fully shoulder its responsibilities in securing safety and survival of Palestinians held by Israeli forces both in Lebanon and Israel," Al-Wazir said. Al-Wazir on the same topic, announced that Israeli forces have recently "killed 41 civilian Palestinians in the Ansar detention camp" of southern Lebanon. He did not disclose further details regarding this development, however. The PLO, according to Al-Wazir, is "still waiting for Israel's response to its conditions regarding an exchange of prisoners including a recognition by Israel. The announcement by Israel of names of 300 Palestinian fighters who were listed as missing "were apparently held by Israeli invasion forces in Lebanon." The conditions, Al-Wazir explained, also include the release of 5,400 persons held in Ansar and 1,000 people held in Israeli jails.

PLO Radio: 'Arafat Meets With King Hassan II

JN171814 Baghdad Voice of PLO in Arabic 1715 GMT 17 Apr 83

[Excerpt] Brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], PLO Executive Committee chairman and commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces, has met with King Hassan II. They reviewed the situation in the Palestinian arena and the latest developments in the Middle East.

Brother Abu 'Ammar arrived in Fes from Algiers where he held similar talks with Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid. The brother commander in chief and his delegation, which comprised Fatah Central Committee members Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] and Abu Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], were welcomed by Ahmed Bensouda, adviser to the Royal Cabinet; Al-Mahdi al-'Alawi, governor of Fes; the PLO representative in Morocco; and several civilian and military figures.

Talks To Continue

JN181051 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1030 GMT 18 Apr 83

[Text] Rabat, 18 Apr (INA)—It was learned here today that King Hassan II of Morocco and PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat during their meeting in Fes last night agreed to resume their talks within the next few days.

An authoritative Palestinian source has told the INA correspondent here that 'Arafat will return to Morocco at the end of his visits to the CSSR and Hungary to resume talks which he began with King Hassan II in Fes last night and which focused on the Palestinian-Jordanian relations and the Palestinian question in the international arena.

It is worth mentioning that 'Arafat left Fes early today en route to Prague and Budapest.

The Palestinian source dismissed reports that the Moroccan monarch and Yasir 'Arafat had agreed on certain points concerning the topics with which their talks dealt, stressing that the talks were comprehensive but would be more specific during the next round, scheduled to take place within the next few days.

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19 APRIL 1983

Lebanon

U.S. Embassy Explosion — A powerful explosion seriously damaged the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, killing at least 30, including several Americans, and injuring scores of others, Beirut radio reported. Lebanese security sources confirmed that the blast was caused by a booby-trapped car with a false diplomatic license plate that crashed into the embassy compound, according to the radio. Within minutes after the explosion the "Islamic Jihad Organization" claimed responsibility for the attack in a telephone call to AFP's office in Beirut, the agency said. Later, Voice of Lebanon radio said Lebanese security forces have detained a number of suspects.

Reaction — Lebanese leaders were quick to condemn the attack. Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan strongly denounced the bombing and reaffirmed that Lebanon will not let this blow divert it from seeking the path of stability and salvation, Beirut radio said. President Amin al-Jumayyil called it a "criminal act" in his condolence message to President Reagan after inspecting the damage and personally supervising the rescue operations, according to the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon. Foreign Minister Elie Salim in a message to Secretary of State Shultz also expressed his belief that this attack, aimed at weakening U.S. and Lebanese determination to restore peace and unity, will not succeed, the Voice of Lebanon reported.

In Israel the prime minister's office said the explosion illustrates precisely why Israel must insist on matters vital to the survival and well-being of its citizens, IDF Radio reported. "Political circles" in Israel hoped that the Beirut attack will encourage Washington to speed up the talks toward an agreement and called for acknowledgement of the "justness" of Israel's demands regarding security, the radio said. Subsequently, Deputy Foreign Minister Yehuda Ben-Me'ir welcomed President Reagan's announcement that the attack on the embassy will not deter U.S. efforts to seek peace in the Middle East, Jerusalem radio said.

Noting that foreign broadcasts have connected Iran with the U.S. Embassy explosion, IRNA said these "opinionated" reports presage fresh plots against Iran's Islamic Revolution. According to an earlier IRNA report, the PLO envoy to Tehran received the news with "gladness" and expressed hope that it would serve as the beginning of a series of new operations against U.S. interests in the region. SANA reported that Iranian television denied any Iranian connection with the bombing.

Netanya Talks — The Israeli-Lebanese-U.S. negotiations resumed at Netanya on 19 April, Jerusalem radio noted.

PLO Affairs

'Arafat Activities — PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Prague where he held talks with Czechoslovak President Gustav Husak, according to CTK and Prague radio. 'Arafat also met with an Israeli RAKAH party delegation in Prague, ITIM reported. Citing PLO sources in Tunis, AFP said 'Arafat will visit Hungary after Czechoslovakia and may also visit Romania. Meanwhile, a Palestinian source in Fes announced that 'Arafat will visit the Soviet Union in the near future, according to KUNA. The director of the PLO office in Fes subsequently revealed that 'Arafat is expected to return to Morocco shortly to complete the talks he began with King Hassan II over the weekend, KUNA reported.

Al-Wazir on Military Operations, U.S. — The PLO will step up military operations against Israeli forces in the coming period, PLO deputy military commander Khalil al-Wazir announced during an Al-Biqa' inspection tour in a statement reported by Radio Monte Carlo. Al-Wazir also told journalists in Damascus that the United States is carrying out an "intensive campaign" against the PLO by inciting Arab countries to withdraw recognition of the organization, Baghdad Voice of PLO radio reported. Warning of further U.S. "interference" in Palestinian internal affairs through a political and media campaign against the PLO accompanied by "instigative conspiracies," Al-Wazir said the U.S. position encourages Israel to launch a military attack against PLO bases.

Syria

The deputy defense minister left for Moscow on a 10-day official visit to the Soviet Union, Radio Monte Carlo reported. Monitored Syrian media have not reported the visit.

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Military Situation — Iraq has decided to reply strongly to Iran's repeated artillery shelling of Basra and Mandali, an Iraqi military spokesman announced in a statement broadcast by Baghdad radio. The Iranians are holding Iraq's warnings in contempt, he said. Iranian and Iraqi military communiques broadcast by Tehran and Baghdad radios indicated that fighting on 17-18 April was largely confined to exchanges of artillery fire during which the Iranians hit Basra and Mandali while the Iraqis shelled Abadan. In a statement broadcast by Baghdad radio, an Iraqi military spokesman claimed that total Iranian losses in the Maysan-Faqih battles 10-17 April included 14,982 killed.

Iraqi-Sponsored Peace Committee — the "Popular Islamic Conference" has formed a "peace and reconciliation committee" which is ready to visit Iran immediately if the Iranian Government grants permission, INA reported citing an "authoritative" source from the conference, which met recently in Baghdad. Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has approved the committee's task, which is to ask Iran and Iraq to negotiate directly a solution that will preserve both sides' rights and restore good bilateral relations, INA said.

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